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LEADERSHIP AND INDOCTRINATION OF RURAL CADRES IN CHINA

[Comment: This report presents information from the Chinese monograph Nung-ts'un Chih-pu Ju-ho Ling-tao Ch'un-chung Sheng-ch'an (How Rural Party Branches Lead the Masses in Production), edited by the Propaganda Department, Liaotung Committee, Chinese Communist Party, and published (probably in Mukden) by the Tung-pei Hsin-hua Shu-tien, November 1949.

Included is a discussion of the role of the ch'u party committee in guiding the operations of the rural party branches, an outline of some problems faced by rural party cadres in performing their duties; and a sketch of the indoctrination programs used by party committees and branches to correct the ideological deviations of cadres and to increase the cadres' effectiveness as propagandists, model workers, and party workers.]

Ch'u Party Committee Leads the Party Branch

The ch'u party committee is the highest echelon of the rural party apparatus, and all party branches in the ch'u are subject to its leadership. Consequently, the quality of the work of the party branches in the countryside depends primarily on the quality of the leadership of the ch'u party committee. Therefore, if the branches are to perform well, the leadership of the ch'u party committees over the branches must be strengthened.

If the ch'u party committees are to do their work properly in relation to the branches, the following factors must be considered:

Comrades in the ch'u party committee must intensify their study. They must study various party policies, particularly production policies, because their primary task will be leading the masses in production. Only by fully grasping the meaning of the various policies can the committee instruct the branch members on how to propagandize these policies, and teach them to perform their work satisfactorily and in conformity with party policies.

Moreover, comrades must study the methods of leadership. For instance, they should know the responsibilities of each member. They should know the responsibilities of the ch'u secretary, and the organization, propaganda, and other committees. Meetings should be held regularly so that experiences may be exchanged, shortcomings corrected, and important matters discussed. Members should know their individual responsibilities. Responsibilities must be divided among the members, each member must assume his share of work, and the work must be coordinated. This is collective leadership.

Since most of the ch'u party committees are made up of new and inexperienced rural cadres, it is imperative that they study party policies and leadership methods to elevate themselves and develop their own leadership. Consequently, there must be a system set up for study and work in the committee.

All work must be done through the party branches. The ch'u committee should lead the branches, but many ch'u committees have actually done the work which should be done by party branches, because the committees did not want to take the trouble of discussing these jobs with the branches. Ch'u committees should neither monopolize the work nor leave it entirely for the branches to do. The committees should first take up what has to be done, decide how it is going to be done, and then take it up with the branches. This should be clearly explained to the party branches so that each member will know

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how to carry on indoctrination and propaganda in government organs, peasant associations, and other mass organizations. Through propaganda by the individual party members, the masses can be persuaded to take part in fulfilling the party branch work programs. The task of the ch'u committee, therefore, is to lead the party branches and train the branch members in assuming their individual roles as propagandists and model workers.

Ch'u party committee members should not just sit at their desks and do paper work. They must visit the branches and observe their weak and strong points and help them solve their immediate problems. If they see certain strong points in a particular branch, these should be disseminated to other branches. If they observe any weakness in a particular branch, they should call this to the branch's attention and have it corrected.

Finally, committee members must constantly instruct party members. The ideology of party members should be regularly investigated. For instance, after the liberation of the Northeast and the completion of land reform in the old revolutionary bases, some cadres were lax in their struggle against the landlords and bad elements in connection with production. Some cadres thought they were superior to others and were undemocratic in their working style, and although some cadres knew they should lead, they did not know how.

Various methods may be used to educate party members. When committee members visit and investigate the branches, they can hold membership meetings to study problems and party courses. Another method is to have ten party members operate a training class for party members for 3-5 days. Aside from discussing problems, the hsien can be asked to send a few persons to participate in the classes.

#### Provides Guidance

With the adoption of the principle of voluntary participation in production groups this year, cadres are asking whether the need for leadership and guidance still exists.

To answer this question, it is important to know that the principle of "voluntaryism" does not mean that the peasant can do as he pleases. At the same time, it is essential to understand that leadership does not mean forceful compulsion.

Many peasants were forced to join production groups [i.e., mutual aid teams] last year. As a result of forcing peasants to join these groups, production did not meet expectations. This year, the principle of voluntary participation has been adopted. However, this does not mean that cadres will no longer need to direct the masses.

Some cadres have the wrong conception of leadership. Leadership does not mean the use of force; instead it involves the use of persuasion. Cadres must work with the masses and take time to study and help the masses solve their production problems. If a cadre sits at this job as a foreman and merely issues orders without considering whether these orders can or will be carried out, the cadre is guilty of bureaucracy. In such cases, force is the only method of getting orders carried out. But, if force is used, the masses thereafter will be afraid of the cadre, will have no contacts with him, and will lose confidence in him.

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In recent years, we have been using force, but we have not succeeded in increasing production. As we adopt the principle of "voluntaryism" this year, cadres should exercise their leadership in the following manner:

1. It is imperative for cadres to know that leadership in production is not an easy task. At times, leadership involves troublesome details which cannot be avoided, and which must be fearlessly faced and overcome. Cadres must be patient, hold their tempers, and carry out their responsibilities steadily and unhurriedly. Bureaucratism must be avoided.
2. Cadres must be enlightened about the meaning of "voluntaryism" and know the importance of production. They must be told that "voluntaryism" does not mean "nonproduction"; instead it means greater production. If the masses have any problems, they should be taken up and solved immediately. Merely holding a mass meeting to air problems will not solve them. If any problems arise this year, the party branches will take up the problem first; then the representatives conference will discuss the matter. After a decision has been made by the representatives conference, cadres and party members of the ts'un government committee will divide the responsibility of carrying out the decisions through the cells. In this way, any problems or anxieties of the masses can be handled on a collective basis and solved through the leadership of the cadres in the cells.
3. There must be an equitable distribution of manpower and draft animals in the various production groups. Some groups have no draft animals but ample manpower and vice versa. This situation must be corrected through the proper allocation of each.
4. There should be a leadership core in each production group. This group should consist of party activists and model workers.

#### Introducing a New Indoctrination Plan

A party membership conference recently convened by the party committee of Wang-ch'ing-men Ch'u, Hsin-pao Hsien, exhibited a new democratic spirit and a new method of indoctrination that deserves attention and adoption in other localities.

This educational procedure contains a number of outstanding features. In the first place, each party member takes the initiative of presenting his own ideological problems for discussion among the members. After ideological problems are thoroughly discussed by the members, a preliminary summary of the discussion is prepared. The party leaders then discuss the preliminary findings of the members and draw up a final summary of the ideological problems. These problems can include anything from difficulties of party members at home on account of their party work to difficulties they have with their nonparty friends in carrying out party programs.

After the final summary is drafted by the party leaders, a meeting is called for the members to engage in "self-introspection" [confession] and criticism and self-criticism. Through these meetings, the members obtain a new ideological outlook, and relate their ideology to reality. After these meetings are held, a system of rewards is set up to arouse the members to action. Following the use of this new method of indoctrination, the ideological problems of the members were basically resolved, and the behavior and work of the members improved.

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Of course, this method as applied in Wang-ch'ing-men Ch'u was not perfect. The meetings for members to bring out their own ideological problems could have been conducted in a more orderly manner. This new indoctrination procedure is being started in many municipal and hsien programs and training classes. It is regrettable that many more party leaders have not promoted this procedure. The procedure is still in its early stages, and it is hoped that other localities will take similar action and report on their experiences.

#### Indoctrination of Rural Party Members and Cadres

This spring [1949], the party committee of Hsin-pao Hsien, Liaotung Province, held training classes for rural party members and party cadres. During the plowing season, classes were again held on two separate occasions. Some preliminary results and valuable experiences were gained from these training classes.

Many rural cadres do not desire to remain cadres. They feel that the masses are not active and that the time they spend working with the masses is wasted. They complain that while others produce and become rich, they remain poor. As a result, many cadres want to give up their positions. Although the leadership is concerned about this and is carrying on ideological instruction, there are still some cadres who are not active and enthusiastic in their work. These are the problems which had to be considered in preparing the educational program for these classes.

Some of the personal problems of the students were solved either before the classes began or during the opening ceremonies of the classes. The students discussed their own problems freely, and their views were evaluated. Gradually the political consciousness of the students was awakened. To awaken the political consciousness of the students, to help them obtain a revolutionary philosophy of life, to guide their future, and to strengthen their confidence in their own work, it was necessary to establish in their minds the attitude of service to the masses, a class attitude, a workers' attitude, and a materialist and an organizational outlook.

The teaching methods first called for the students to discuss freely their practical everyday problems. Setting aside the trivial problems raised by the students, the teacher then selected and guided discussion of the most important problems. These problems were debated until some conclusions are reached.

The contents of the training classes were oriented to the ideological level of the students. Before each lecture began, the teacher reviewed problems of the previous day's lecture. Each new lecture was related to some of the problems posed in the previous lecture. Lectures were interspersed with discussions.

The content of the courses was also oriented to the everyday problems of the cadres and to their actual experiences. Textbooks selected were those which deal with the class outlook of leading personalities, including Chairman Mao Tse-tung's essays on the philosophy of life.

During the first week, the lectures dealt with two problems: Did you want to take this training? and How to study? Questions such as, "Is it worthwhile to be a cadre?" and "What are some of the hardships of being a rural cadre?" were discussed. Such discussion revealed some of the ideological problems of the students and some of the personal hardships of the rural cadres.

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Some of the difficulties confronted by cadres are as follows:

1. The masses are not active and enthusiastic; cadres are scapegoats; meetings are difficult to handle; some people say they are good, some say they are bad. Some of the family dependents of military personnel and war heroes do not pay their grain taxes and do not follow leadership.
2. Family hardships -- While other families have material goods and become model workers, cadres are poor.
3. Pressure -- If work is incomplete, superiors criticize the cadres; if it is completed, cadres are accused of being undemocratic and of using force to get the job done. In the spring, when land must be surveyed [for land reform], the peasants want to cheat the government regarding the size of their farms. There are so many types of people to handle, and if you do not please them, they insult you.
4. As a cadre in the rural areas, you confront difficulties everywhere. If you are too active the people dislike you; if you do not show your authority, they say you do not know how to handle affairs. If you hold meetings, some will ridicule you and accuse you of holding meetings for ulterior motives.
5. The wealthy landlords outwardly are afraid to start any trouble, but the poor peasant and hired farmhands are the ones who are difficult to manage. The veterans and their families are difficult to handle; since they are well organized and have earned merits through their service, it is difficult to tell them anything.
6. The disunity among the cadres makes life difficult. When there is internal disunity, everyone seeks credit for work that is well performed and blames others for mistakes.
7. If a cadre does his work well, he receives no encouragement. If he does his work poorly, he will certainly hear from his superiors.
8. A cadre not only has to do his work properly, but he must also work "democratically" and in line with "policy."

The disclosure of these difficulties faced by cadres reveals why so many cadres are disheartened and discouraged, and why some of them question the value and advantage of being a cadre. Following the discussion of these individual problems of cadres, other aspects of a cadre's life were discussed.

These were some of the questions asked of the cadres:

1. As cadres, what merit did you earn? What have you done for the masses?
2. Has anyone praised you for your services? Why do people say you are no good?

These two sets of questions prompted the cadres to discuss some of their achievements.

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Some cadres spoke of their participation in the guerrilla war, and how they served as spies, guides, etc. Others said that, under the leadership of the party, they directed the struggle of the masses against the feudalistic elements of the countryside. Some said they led the masses in increasing agricultural production to fulfill Communist production policies and quotas. Some women cadres said they encouraged the youth of the countryside to join the army, and even encouraged their husbands to join. Others spoke of their leadership in organizing winter schools and encouraging the masses to attend them. Some pointed out that through their efforts the land survey was completed. The transfer of land to the peasants, increased grain production, and the paying of grain taxes were cited as accomplishments of the cadres. Finally, the cadres spoke of their work in enlightening the masses, and how they were selected to serve as cadres by the villagers.

After discussing the various accomplishments of the cadres, the atmosphere of the meeting and the attitude of the cadres changed. They became more conscious of the fact that the hardships and difficulties of a cadre are offset by their accomplishments, and that although some people will hate them, others will like them, and that tears and laughter go together in their work.

As the atmosphere and attitude of the cadres changed, the discussion turned to other problems, namely, who will take over our jobs if we quit? If the masses are not active, what can we do to change them? Short of using force, what steps can be taken to activate the masses and to eliminate their lethargy?

These were some of the suggestions offered by the cadres:

1. Fine the masses for failure to carry out directions. Cadres should also be fined for their failure to perform duties assigned them. By fining the cadres as well as the peasants, the latter will see that the system of fines is equitable.
2. Point out to the masses the ill effects of not following policies and programs. A simple illustration of this point is the calamity of famine that once resulted because the peasants would not follow the production policies of the party.
3. Teach the masses by being a model worker yourself, and point out the accomplishments of other model workers and cadres.
4. Instruct the masses through criticism and self-criticism, and report the good works of individuals as well as criticizing their shortcomings.

For individuals who refuse to be enlightened, it is necessary for cadres to explain to them the meaning of democracy, democratic centralism, the need for the individual to follow the rules of the majority, and that force can be applied to individuals who refuse to follow the decision of the majority.

With these ideological problems settled, the cadres then discussed means to remove hindrances to their work. These hindrances include too many meetings and too many detailed and miscellaneous duties to perform in the rural areas. The time consumed in handling the affairs of the dependents of veterans alone keeps the cadres from performing their regular duties. Finally, the personal economic hardships suffered by the cadres and their families hinder their work.

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Since these are inevitable hardships that cadres must face, they must increase their "study" of party policies, take a more active role in leading production, agitate and arouse the masses, and discuss the work program with the masses to secure their approval. Once their approval is secured, the cadres must unite and carry out decisions resolutely. Responsibilities must be shared by the cadres; the number of meetings must be cut down. All these steps will help remove the practical obstacles that hinder the cadres' work in the rural area.

However, removing these obstacles will not suffice unless the individual cadre eliminates such ideological obstructions as "careerism" and "individual glory," and creates within himself a "revolutionary" philosophy of life. The cadre must know what he is living for, see the fallacy of living for material things alone, and cast away the philosophy of "eat, drink, and be merry, for one knows not what the morrow brings." The evils of being satisfied with the status quo and refusing to make progress must be criticized. Finally, to remove these ideological obstacles, cadres must be indoctrinated with ideas of serving the working class and dedicating their lives to the struggle of the working class and Communism.

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